

7B1
1. (Amended twice) An apparatus for packaging contact lenses, said apparatus comprising:

a plurality¹⁴ of discrete carriers, said carriers being movable within said apparatus; [and]

a plurality of contact lens containers²⁴, each container having a recess, a sealing flange about the recess, and a contact lens within said recess, a single one of said containers being mounted on a single one of said carriers; and a lidstock maneuvering system for placing lidstock over said recess and said sealing flange of said containers; wherein when said lidstock is sealed to said sealing flange, said containers and lidstock form sealed packages.

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2. (Amended once) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each carrier has a cavity, each [container having a bowl,] said [bowl] recess of said container being [receiving] received in said cavity of said carrier.

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5. (Amended twice) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said apparatus further compris[ing]es:

a plurality of lifts;¹⁸

a plurality of platens,¹⁰ each of said platens being individually supported by one of said lifts, each of said [containers] carriers being mounted on a respective one of said platens; and

a mandrel disposed above said platens; [and]

wherein said lifts apply pressure, within a predetermined range, to each of said containers.

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6. (Amended once) The apparatus according to claim 5, [further comprising a] wherein said lidstock maneuvering system is operative to engage a lidstock and to position said lidstock between said mandrel and said plurality of platens.

7. (Amended once) The apparatus according to claim [5] 6, wherein said lidstock has a thickness and said container has a thickness, and further wherein said mandrel is selectively moveable between a retracted upper position and an engaged lower position to seal said lidstock to said containers, and wherein in said lower position, a pressure applied by said mandrel against each of said platens is maintained within said predetermined range by the respective lifts, thereby compensating for tolerance differences in the thickness of said containers and the thickness of said lidstock to ensure that an adequate seal is formed between said lidstock and each of said containers.

9. (Amended twice) The [An] apparatus of claim 1, wherein [for automatically packaging contact lenses,] said apparatus further comprises[ing]:

[at least one carrier;

a plurality of contact lens containers being mounted on said at least one carrier;]

a plurality of lifts;

a plurality of mandrels disposed above each of said [at least one] carriers, each of said mandrels being individually supported by one of said lifts;

wherein said lifts apply pressure, within a predetermined range, to each of said mandrels.

10. (Amended twice) The apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising a lidstock maneuvering system operative to engage a lidstock and to position said lidstock between said mandrels and said [at least one] carriers.

11. (Amended twice) The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said lidstock has a thickness and said container has a thickness, wherein said mandrels are [is] selectively moveable between a retracted upper position and an engaged lower

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position to seal said lidstock to said containers, and wherein in said lower position, a pressure applied by said mandrels against each of said [platens] containers is maintained within said predetermined range by the respective lifts, thereby compensating for tolerance differences in the thickness of said containers and the thickness of said lidstock to ensure that an adequate seal is formed between said lidstock and each of said containers.

15. (Amended once) The [An] apparatus [for packaging contact lenses, said apparatus comprising] of claim 1, wherein said lidstock maneuvering system further comprises:

a lidstock having indicia printed thereon[, said lidstock being fed from a roll under tension]; and

a vision alignment inspection system having means for checking the print quality on said lidstock and for simultaneously checking for registration of said lidstock within said apparatus.

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16. (Amended once) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said lidstock maneuvering system further compris[ing]es a printing system and a cutting system, wherein said lidstock is fed from [said] a roll under tension into said printing system and said cutting system, and said vision alignment inspection system is located after said printing system.

17. (Amended once) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said lidstock maneuvering system further compris[ing]es a printing system and a cutting system, wherein said lidstock is fed from [said] a roll under tension into [a] said printing system and said cutting system and said alignment inspection system is located between said printing system and said cutting system.

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19. (Amended once) The apparatus of claim [17] 16, wherein said cutting system

is located after said printing system.

20. (Amended once) The apparatus of claim [18] 17, wherein said cutting system is located after said printing system.

Kindly add new claim 22-25 as follows:

--22. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein multiple said containers are sealed to said lidstock to form a set of packages.

23. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said lidstock is held in position by said lidstock maneuvering system between said mandrel and said plurality of platens until said mandrel contacts said lidstock.

24. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said lidstock is held in position by said lidstock maneuvering system between said plurality of mandrels and said platen until said mandrels contact said lidstock.

25. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein multiple said containers are sealed to said lidstock to form a set of packages --

Remarks

The above amendments and remarks which follow are in response to the Office Action mailed March 30, 2000 in which claims 1, 2, 5-8 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, 102, and 103, and claims 9-20 were finally withdrawn from consideration due to a restriction requirement. All of the rejections of the claims, and the restriction requirement are traversed and reconsideration of the claims as amended herein is respectfully requested.

The Office Action indicates that claims 9-20 were withdrawn from consideration due to a restriction requirement. Although the restriction requirement is traversed claims 9, and 15 were amended to depend from claim 1; therefore, Group I presently consists of claims 1, 2, 5-12, 15-25, because all the Group I claims have the